

“What’s it like growing up as a girl?”

That’s a question you may need to answer a guy friend about, but it’s really hard. You haven’t kissed a guy? You’re so irrelevant. Kissed a guy? Hoe. Have a butt? Oops. Better cover that up! Don’t have a butt? You’re so flat. Skinny? Anorexic, ugh, go eat something. Not so skinny? OMG, go to the gym! Friends with guys? Better hop off. Not friends with guys? 7-year-old. Talk a lot? Attention seeker. Don’t talk a lot? Why are you so shy? Say something! The fact is, I’m growing up in a messed-up society, where we’re taught our looks are more important than anything else. We never hear society say we’re beautiful inside AND out.

Beauty guru James Charles tweeted out: “It’s so weird how our faces never change but some days we feel hideous and others we feel stunning and unstoppable. It’s true. Really, honestly, true. Which makes it even worse to grow up as a girl because society can be a scary AF place sometimes and it hurts because sometimes it’s like no one really cares. I feel like we should be born with the ability to read and then be given pamphlets that say: “Welcome to our society. Here, you will be judged on what you wear, which music you listen to, what you look like, how you act, who you hang around with, and on practically every other personal trait and imperfection about you, and you’ll be made fun of for who you are. Enjoy your stay!” If that were the case, we could all just know what’s coming and deal with it early on, in our own ways, instead of being thrown like newborn lambs to a pack of proverbial wolves. It’s like we’re all MURDERERS: we’ve killed the version of ourselves that were kind, happy, and friendly.

I think that’s why I want to go back to when I was little. I had actual friends, didn’t have to worry about ANYTHING, and the highlight of my day wasn’t coming home and finally being able to show my true emotions. It was being pulled down the street in my little blue wagon with my best friend, eating oyster crackers, and watching the sunset from the comfort of my dad’s lap, holding my mom’s hand, and knowing how loved I really was. It SUCKS to look back sometimes, because everything was so much simpler then. It’s so easy to see things change SO MUCH from when we were little, especially once you hit high school. One of the biggest things public high school taught me was that being a teenager sucks. Your best friends become strangers, lollipops turn into cigarettes, the innocent ones become hoes, homework goes in the trash, and soda becomes vodka.

Remember the good days? When getting high meant swinging on the playground? When protection meant wearing a helmet? When the worst thing you could get from a guy was cooties? When our dads’ shoulders were the highest place on earth and our moms were our heroes? Our worst enemies were our siblings, race issues were about who ran the fastest, the only drug we knew about was Panadol, wearing skirts didn’t make you a toy, the only thing that hurt us was our scraped knees and goodbyes only meant, “see you tomorrow?” We all said we couldn’t wait to grow up. What were we thinking?

And don’t get me started on boys. Most guys just want girlfriends they can hang out with, have fun with, or just to show them off. You aren’t supposed to date for fun! It’s about knowing yourself, seeing what you do/don’t want in a SPOUSE! Knowing what your limits and morals are. You don’t date for fun or to show off. You date to prepare yourself for marriage! Us girls are like Waterford vases: super easy to destroy, SUPER expensive/impossible to replace. The remains are SHARP! Everyone admired the whole thing, but nobody thinks about AFTER the vase breaks. The remains are SHARP! But the pieces are “so messy” or “so much work.” Yeah? Well, so are ALL girls. GET OVER IT! No one is perfect, ESPECIALLY when they’re filled with estrogen, which is a cancerous chemical, btw. But that’s what love is too, right? SUPER HARD to survive without, sometimes even harder to put up with. Honestly, I’d rather crush my SOUL than be rejected again. Like, I worked up all this courage to admit my feelings, and they toss you aside like yesterday’s newspaper. I’ve had one boyfriend, JUST ONE, but ever since or before, I haven’t had another. Just for once I want to be accepted and held in a tight embrace by someone who ISN’T my parents; is that so much to ask for?

I wish there was a switch so that the guys had to walk in OUR shoes for a year and understand how we feel: make THEM look in the mirror and wonder if they look good enough for society, make THEM deal with our bodies and emotions, MAKE THEM REALIZE HOW BAD IT HURTS TO BE PUT UP ON A PEDESTAL BY THEIR FRIENDS, JUST TO BE NUKED DOWN BY A GUY! Maybe then, MAYBE THEN, things would change. People always say, "You've got this!" but when you do, you actually DON'T and it breaks you. Maybe if that switch existed, there'd be respect. There'd be understanding. And especially for people who hurt themselves because they weren't "good enough," there'd be some stinking achievement in therapy! We need more support in this world.

No matter what, we have hope and it seems so pointless sometimes, but maybe why we have hope is because we need to do something about it. Because you know what's fucking scary? The fact I could literally change my life at any moment. I could stop talking to everyone that makes me unhappy. I could kiss my crush. I could shave my head, or get on a plane to anywhere I want. I could even take my own life. **Nothing** is stopping me. The entire world is in my hands, and I have no idea what to do with it.